

FUEL SUPPLY METHOD AND FUEL SUPPLY SYSTEM  
FOR FUEL INJECTION DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5       Technical Field

The present invention relates to a fuel supply method for fuel injection members of a fuel injection device, and a fuel supply system for carrying out the fuel supply method, more specifically, to a fuel supply method for fuel injection members of a fuel injection device of a gas turbine so as to achieve low-NO<sub>x</sub> operation, and a fuel supply system for carrying out the fuel supply method.

Description of the Related Art

15       There has been a demand in recent years for a fuel injection nozzle for combustors, capable of injecting fuel such that the exhaust gas has a low NO<sub>x</sub> concentration, owing to the recent progressively growing severity of controls concerning NO<sub>x</sub> emission imposed on  
20       aero and industrial combustors. To achieve low-NO<sub>x</sub> combustion, the fuel injection nozzle is required to inject fuel such that the mean flame temperature is low and temperature distribution in flames is uniform. Fuel must be mixed with a large amount of air to lower the  
25       mean flame temperature and to make temperature distribution in flames uniform.

Although no problem arises in combustion in a combustor while the combustor is operating in high-power setting, combustion becomes unstable while the combustor  
30       is operating in low-power or middle-power setting, when fuel is jetted by a conventional fuel injection nozzle N having a single fuel passage 101 as shown in Fig. 4 and the fuel is mixed in a large amount of air for low-NO<sub>x</sub> combustion.

35       As shown in Fig. 5, an improved fuel injection system A' obtained by altering the conventional fuel

injection nozzle N has been proposed as a means for avoiding unstable combustion that occurs in the low-power or middle-power setting. The fuel injection system A' has a plurality of series of swirl vanes 201 which  
5 are concentrically arranged in different radial positions, and a plurality of series of fuel injection mechanisms 202 which are concentrically arranged in different radial positions. The operation of the fuel injection mechanisms 202 is regulated according to  
10 engine power settings, and the amount of air into which the fuel is mixed is regulated. The fuel injection system A' is capable of injecting fuel for the so-called staging combustion.

In the previously proposed fuel injection system A',  
15 fuel is supplied to the fuel injection mechanisms 202 through fuel supply pipes 203 extended through the casing of a gas turbine. Consequently, the flow of combustion air is disturbed and turbulences of the flow of combustion air are caused, thereby, combustion air  
20 cannot properly supplied to the fuel injection mechanisms 202. There is the possibility that welded joints of the fuel injection mechanisms 202 and the fuel supply pipes 203 are damaged or cracks develop therein due to difference in thermal expansion between the fuel  
25 injection mechanisms 202 and the fuel supply pipes 203. Moreover, the fuel supply pipes 203 are obstacles to assembling work for assembling the gas turbine.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

30 Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide a fuel supply method and a fuel supply system for a fuel injection device that has a plurality of concentrically arranged swirl vanes and a plurality of concentrically arranged fuel injection  
35 mechanism, and the fuel supply method and system provide facilitating work for assembling a fuel injection system

into a gas turbine, properly supplying combustion air into the fuel injection device, and no thermal expansion problems.

According to a first aspect of the present invention, a fuel supply method for a fuel injection device including a fuel injection unit provided with a plurality of fuel injection members, comprises: holding the fuel injection unit by a holding unit, and connecting the fuel injection members to the holding unit by a connecting unit; wherein a fuel is supplied to the fuel injection members through fuel supply passages formed in the holding unit and the connecting-and-supplying unit so as to extend from the holding unit through the connecting unit to the fuel injection members.

Preferably, portions of the fuel passages formed in the holding unit and portions of the fuel passages formed in the connecting unit are connected in a liquid-tight fashion.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, a fuel supply system for a fuel injection device including a fuel injection unit provided with a plurality of fuel injection members, comprises: a holding-and-supplying unit configured to hold the fuel injection unit and supply fuel to each of the fuel injection members of the fuel injection unit; and a connecting-and-supplying unit configured to connect the plurality of fuel injection members to the holding-and-supplying unit, wherein fuel supply passages are formed in the holding-and-supplying unit and the connecting-and-supplying unit so as to extend from the holding-and-supplying unit through the connecting-and-supplying unit to the fuel injection members.

Preferably, portions of the fuel supply passages formed in the connecting-and-supplying unit are formed so as to overlap each other with respect to a flowing

direction of combustion air.

Preferably, portions of the fuel passages formed in the holding-and-supplying unit and portions of the fuel passages formed in the connecting-and-supplying unit are  
5 connected by connecting pieces fitted in the holding-and-supplying unit and the connecting-and-supplying unit in a liquid-tight fashion.

According to a third aspect of the present invention, a fuel injection device comprises one of the  
10 above-mentioned fuel supply systems.

The present invention facilitates work for assembling a gas turbine and is capable of properly supplying combustion air to the fuel injection device. Since there is no individual fuel supply pipe, it is  
15 free from troubles attributable to fuel supply pipes.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a sectional view of a fuel injection device including a fuel supply system in a preferred embodiment according to the present invention, to which  
20 a fuel supply method in a preferred embodiment according to the present invention is applied;

Fig. 2 is a front elevation of the fuel injection device shown in Fig. 1;

25 Fig. 3 is a sectional view of the part B in Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a sectional view of a conventional fuel injection nozzle; and

Fig. 5 is a sectional view of a conventional fuel injection device with a plurality of concentrically  
30 arranged swirl vanes and fuel injection mechanism.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Preferred embodiments of the present invention will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings  
35 by way of example.

Referring to Figs. 1 and 2 showing a fuel injection

device A for a gas turbine combustor, including a fuel supply system to which a fuel supply method in the present embodiment is applied, the fuel injection device A includes, as principal components, a fuel injection unit 10 that injects fuel and produces fuel-air mixture into a combustor, a holding-and-supplying unit 20 holding the fuel injection unit 10, and a connecting-and-supplying unit 30 connecting the fuel injection unit 10 and the holding-and-supplying unit 20. The holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 are configured to form passages for supplying fuel to the fuel injection unit 10.

As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the fuel injection unit 10 includes a first fuel injection member 40 disposed in a central part of the fuel injection unit 10, a second fuel injection member 50 surrounding the first fuel injection member 40, an atomizing mechanism 60 disposed between the first fuel injection member 40 and the second fuel injection member 50, and around the second fuel injection member 50 to atomize injected fuel, and a mixing duct 80 surrounding the atomizing mechanism 60.

As shown in Fig. 1, the first fuel injection member 40 has a cylindrical front part 41. A fuel supply passage 42 has one end connected to the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 and the other end connected to a central part of the base end of cylindrical front end part 41. A plurality of fuel injection holes 44 are connected to the fuel supply passage 42. The first fuel injection member 40 is formed integrally with the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 by welding or brassing.

The second fuel injection member 50 has a base end part 51 provided with a longitudinally extending, annular fuel reservoir 53 of a predetermined depth. A predetermined number of fuel injection holes 54 are formed from the fuel reservoir 53 so that fuel is supplied to the fuel injection holes 54. The second fuel

injection member 50 is formed integrally with the connecting-and-supplying unit 30.

As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the holding-and-supplying unit 20 has a flange 21 attached to a casing mount, and a neck 22 extending from the lower surface 21a of the flange 21 and connected to the mixing duct 80 of the fuel injection unit 10. The holding-and-supplying unit 20 is internally provided with fuel supply passages 23 and 24 extending from the upper end surface 21b of the flange 21 through the neck 22 to the front surface 22a of the neck 22. The fuel supply passage 23 communicates with a fuel passage 42 formed in the first fuel injection member 40 by means of a fuel supply passage 31 formed in the connecting-and-supplying unit 30. Similarly, the fuel supply passage 24 communicates with the fuel reservoir 53 of the second fuel injection member 50 by means of a fuel supply passage 32 formed in the connecting-and-supplying unit 30.

The fuel supply passages 23 and 24 of the holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the fuel supply passages 31 and 32 of the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 are connected as shown in Fig. 3. Recesses 27 are formed in parts corresponding to the fuel supply passages 23 and 24 in a joining surface 26 of the holding-and-supplying unit 20, in which the fuel supply passages 23 and 24 of the holding-and-supplying unit 20 open, to be joined to the connecting-and-supplying unit 30. Connecting pieces 25 having the shape of a hollow cylinder are fitted in a liquid-tight (water-tight) fashion in the recesses 27 so that projecting parts 25a of a predetermined length thereof project from the recess 27. The projecting parts 25a of the connecting pieces 25 are fitted in recesses 34 formed in the joining surface 33 of the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 to be joined to the joining surface 26 of the holding-and-supplying unit 20. Thus, the fuel supply passages 23 and 24 of the holding-and-

supplying unit 20 are connected to the fuel supply passages 31 and 32 of the connecting-and-supplying unit 30, respectively.

5 A plurality of annular grooves 25b are formed in each of the projecting parts 25a. Bonding materials 25c, such as hard solders, are filled in the annular grooves 25b. The projecting parts 25a are fitted in the recesses 34. The holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 are heated in a furnace  
10 to melt the bonding materials 25c, and then, the molten bonding materials 25c, the holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 are cooled. Thus, the bonding materials 25c bond the projecting parts 25a to the side surfaces of the recesses 34 in a  
15 liquid-tight fashion.

The connecting-and-supplying unit 30 includes a cylindrical member 30a disposed in a central part of the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 and having a front end joined to the first fuel injection member 40, an annular  
20 member 30b concentrically surrounding the cylindrical member 30a and having a front end joined to the second fuel injection member 50, a plate-shaped connecting member 30c connecting the annular member 30b to the holding-and-supplying unit 20, connecting members 30d  
25 connecting the cylindrical member 30a and the annular member 30b, and a mixing duct holding member 30e holding the mixing duct 80 on the annular member 30b. All these members are formed by machining in a single unitary piece without using welding. Combustion air passages  
30 through which combustion air flows into the atomizing mechanism 60 are formed between the cylindrical member 30a and the annular member 30b, and around the annular member 30b.

The fuel supply passage 31 extends through the  
35 annular member 30b and the connecting members 30d to the fuel supply passage 42 of the first fuel injection

member 40. The fuel supply passage 32 extends through the annular member 30b to the fuel reservoir 53 of the second fuel injection member 50. The fuel supply passages 31 and 32 are arranged so as to overlap each other with respect to the flowing direction of combustion air. For example, the fuel supply passages 31 and 32 are extended vertically and arranged longitudinally, to avoid uselessly increasing the width, i.e., a dimension with respect to a direction perpendicular to the flowing direction of combustion air, of the connecting member 30c, and to avoid uselessly increasing resistance against the flow of combustion air.

The connecting member 30c has the shape of the inverted letter L. The connecting member 30c has a horizontal part having an end joined to the holding-and-supplying unit 20 and provided with a stepped part 30f in which a base end part 81 of the mixing duct 80 is fixedly fitted. The fuel supply passages 31 and 32 connected to the fuel supply passages 23 and 24 of the holding-and-supplying unit 20 are formed in the connecting member 30c. The projecting parts 25a are fitted in recesses 34 formed in parts corresponding to the fuel supply passages 31 and 32 and formed in the end surface of the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 facing the holding-and-supplying unit 20.

The mixing duct holding member 30e is formed in the shape of a deformed letter L and has a thin horizontal part. A stepped part 30h is formed in a front end part of the horizontal part. The base end part 81 of the mixing duct 80 is fixedly fitted in the stepped part 30h.

Although the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 is cooled by fuel and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 tends to shrink relative to the mixing duct 80, there is not any difference in thermal expansion between the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 and the mixing duct 80 because the base part 81 of the mixing duct 80 is



fixedly fitted in the stepped parts 30f and 30h of the connecting-and-supplying unit 30. Since only the thermal expansion difference between parts of the holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 within a short distance from the joint of the holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 needs to be taken into consideration in estimating a shearing stress that may be induced in the joint in designing the holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30, shearing force that may act on the connecting pieces 25 can be reduced, the possibility of fuel leakage due to the breakage of the connecting pieces 25 can be reduced, and the fuel supply passages can be surely connected in a liquid-tight fashion.

The words upper and lower are used for designating upper and lower parts as viewed in Figs. 1 and 2 for convenience and do not necessarily designate upper and lower parts on the combustor of an actual gas turbine.

In the fuel supply system of the present embodiment thus constructed, the fuel supply passages 23 and 24 are formed in the holding-and-supplying unit 20, and the fuel supply passages 31 and 32 are formed in the connecting-and-supplying unit 30; that is, the holding-and-supplying unit 20 and the connecting-and-supplying unit 30 are internally provided with the fuel supply passages 23, 24, 31 and 32 connected to the first fuel injection member 50 and the second fuel injection member 50. Therefore, the fuel supply system does not need any fuel supply pipes and is simple in construction. The elimination of fuel supply pipes prevents the occurrence of troubles due to fuel supply pipes. For example, preventive means for preventing the breakage of fuel supply pipes liable to occur in installing a fuel supply system are unnecessary, and hence the fuel supply system can be efficiently assembled. The fuel supply system is

free from troubles due to the difference in thermal expansion between fuel supply pipes and a supporting part.

Various modifications of the foregoing fuel supply system are possible. For example, the fuel supply system may be provided with a third fuel injection member surrounding the second fuel injection member 50 in addition to the first fuel injection member 40 and the second fuel injection member 50. When the fuel injection device A is disposed at a lower portion of the annular combustor instead of an upper portion of the combustor, "upper" and "lower" used in the foregoing description are replaced with "lower" and "upper", respectively.

Although the invention has been described in its preferred embodiment, obviously many changes and variations are possible therein. It is therefore to be understood that the present invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described herein without departing from the scope and spirit thereof.